

Guide to scallops for seafood chefs

There are more than 40 commercial species of scallop exploited worldwide amounting to almost 2 million tonnes from both capture fisheries and aquaculture.

In appearance the attractive fan-shaped shells contain translucent off-white meat wrapped with a bright orange roe. This is effectively two types of meat in one shell: the adductor muscle, called 'scallop' which is white and meaty, and the roe, called 'coral', which is red or white and soft. Scallop meat has a sweet, delicate flavour, and requires very little cooking – the simpler the better. Best either steamed, pan-fried or grilled.

However, scallops can accumulate naturally occurring biotoxins that require processors and chefs to ensure that correct shucking and effective, thorough washing is carried out. This leaflet provides chefs with essential food safety guidance, as well as some useful information about scallops which they can share with customers.

There are three fishing methods used to harvest wild scallops. These are: dredging, trawling and diving. Scallops are most commonly harvested using scallop dredges or bottom trawls. Recently, scallops harvested by divers, hand-caught on the ocean floor, have entered the marketplace. In contrast to scallops

captured by a dredge across the sea floor, diver scallops tend to be less gritty. They may also be more ecologically friendly, as the harvesting method does not cause damage to undersea flora or fauna.

It is important that chefs know the method of scallop production as this will have an impact on meat content, shelf life and biofouling (barnacles, algae, etc) on the shells.

Key resources for seafood chefs on free DVD

- Recipe demonstrations
- Scallop shucking demonstrations
- Fact sheets on scallops
- Hand washing training programmes
- Fire fighting demonstration

To request a free DVD simply log on to www.seafoodacademy.org/scallops.html and send us an email.

Essential facts about scallops

- Scallops are filter-feeding bivalve molluscs that live mainly on sandy gravel or gravel substrates.
- Large scallops such as King Scallops have 15cm wide shells (one rounded, one flat) and can have a life-span of up to 20 years. There are approximately 18 to 35 pieces of meat per kg.
- Smaller species such as Queen Scallops have 7cm wide shells and usually have a life-span of less than 10 years. There are approximately 40 to 120 pieces of meat per kg.
- Some species including King and Queen Scallops are hermaphrodites.
- Scallop farming was developed in Japan in the late 1960s.
- Scallops are farmed mainly on the west coast of Scotland.
- There are minimum sizes for the harvesting and landing of Scallops. These ensure scallops are not harvested wastefully at too small a size for breeding or growth.
- Scallops are very low in saturated fat. They are a good source of Magnesium and Potassium, and a very good source of Protein, Vitamin B12, Phosphorus and Selenium.

Scallops and Food Safety – Guide for Chefs

Like other filter-feeding bivalves, scallops can accumulate natural biotoxins from the plankton that make up their diet. In line with EU legislative requirements, the UK operates a strict biotoxin monitoring programme for shellfish, including scallops. Therefore the incidence of contaminated scallops reaching the market place is low. However, biotoxins can still present a potentially serious health risks and this is apparently an increasing problem worldwide.

In the UK, responsibility for ensuring food safety rests with the food business operator who has to demonstrate that end product health standards are met. However, in the case of scallops that are supplied whole, or in-shell, the caterer or chef must ensure that they are correctly handled and safely prepared.

- If you use whole scallops then you have a legal responsibility to ensure that they are correctly shucked and washed before they are prepared and served to customers.
- In the EU, suppliers have to demonstrate compliance with an end product health standard.
- Note what the health mark on your box of scallops says and keep your delivery documents and health marks on file.
- All 'shuckers' should be trained in 'shucking' technique according to current best practice. It is important to be able to safely and correctly shuck live scallops. Look at the shucking demonstrations on the Chef's DVD.
- Keep the shucked edible meat separate from the shucked waste to avoid cross contamination. Rinse all shucked scallops briefly as soon as they've been shucked.
- Scallops should be visually inspected at all stages but in particular:
 - On arrival – broken shells should be discarded;
 - Dead scallops can still be used as long as they have been kept chilled but not for too long;
 - After shucking – remove all black bits; and
 - After washing – make a final check before cooking.
- The waste juices from scallops may contain biotoxins and care must be taken not to contaminate surfaces, cloths, etc.
- Don't use the viscera (the membrane, grey-brown frill and black thread of intestine are all discarded – these are inedible. Don't crisp it, cook it, blitz it or even feed it to your pets. Just throw it away as it is potentially dangerous if consumed.
- Wash your shucked, rinsed, inspected and trimmed scallops. Wash them in free running clean tap water for at least 10 minutes. Agitate them frequently. Don't cut corners. They will take on water, this cannot be avoided. They can be firmed up by placing on an absorbent surface (kitchen roll, etc) for 10 – 20 minutes in the fridge.
- Store your whole scallops in the chiller or fridge. It's safer to store shucked and washed scallops than live scallops, as the scallop gut wall quickly breaks down, releasing gut contents to contaminate the edible meat. It is similar to fish – which would you keep in the fridge, gutted or ungutted?

Remember:

Shuck

Rinse

Inspect
and Trim

Wash for
10 minutes

Cook

Enjoy!

Scallop Recipes

The Scallop Chef DVD contains eight scallop cooking demonstrations by four talented seafood chefs. Here are summaries of some of their recipes. To see the full recipe demonstrations please request a **Scallops for Chefs DVD** from Seafish or visit www.seafoodacademy.org/scallops.html where you will find online versions of the demonstrations.

1. Scottish King Scallops in a dashi sauce

Pan fried scallops and poached scallop roe are accompanied by crab, mussels and peppers complemented by a dashi sauce with herb infusion.

Ingredients include fresh Scottish scallops, dried powdered scallop roe, crab, mussels, red peppers, dashi, fish stock, parsley, thyme, chervil and chives.

2. Scottish King Scallops steamed in the shell

Scallops are baked in the pastry sealed shell with vegetables and spices and the dish opened at the table.

Ingredients include fresh Scottish scallops, carrot, ginger, leak, garlic, soy sauce, lime juice, toasted sesame oil, egg wash and puff pastry.

3. Ceviche of Scottish King Scallops with a Mango and Chilli Salsa

A very simple dish where the thinly sliced scallops are marinated in lime juice for 15-30 minutes, or longer for larger scallops.

Ingredients include fresh Scottish King Scallops, mango, avocado, coriander, chilli, limes, crème fraiche.

4. Scallops Torizo

A simple dish that joins the flavours of Scottish scallops with that of the smoked sausage to produce a colourful and tasty starter.

Ingredients include fresh Scottish King Scallops, Torizo sausage, lemon and salad.

1



2



3



4



Washing guide for scallops

It's 10 for a reason,
remember to use a timer.

